

2004
Frank J. Osborne Memorial Award

Presented by the New Jersey Health Officers Association
to
Jorge Berkowitz, Ph.D.

Doral Forrestal Conference Center & Spa, Princeton, NJ
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By
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President

TODAY IS A NEW DAY, AND EVERYTHING GOOD IS POSSIBLE. Ezekiel, the Prophet said it this way — "make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit . . . " President Ronald Reagan in July 1988 when asked about paying compensation to people injured by actions of The United States and the precedent it would set answered " . . . **I don't ever find compassion a bad precedent.**"

Today is a new day and the NJ Health Officers Association is doing a good thing. Hopefully it is demonstrating a new spirit. It is honoring the memory of one of its most illustrious members — Frank J. Osborne . . . for all the meritorious services he rendered which are listed on the award brochures. It is with COMPASSION that we honor his memory and bestow this award, rightly named after him, on a very deserving individual — not a bad precedent, if I do say so myself.

The Assn.'s first Osborne Award was in 1963 to William H. MacDonald, and lastly awarded on November 20, 2003 to Lee. B. Reichman, MD. [By the way, all this information is on the Assn.'s web page — where you will also see my smiling face on the Photo Album page for which I will now correct the narrative error — it claims that I "was elected President of our association on November 19, 2004 at the Annual meeting in Atlantic City." But as you all know we have not yet reached November 19, 2004]

Last years' recipient was a doctor (MD), and this year's recipient is also a doctor (PhD) This title never impressed his mother — who would remind others that despite his PhD, he was not a 'real doctor'.

However, he once told one of our members "A good health officer can save more lives in a career than a good doctor". Boy, am I glad that Dr. Lacy left early!

We also learned that our recipient is one of a very few people in NJ to have paid extra money when he was building his new home for an experimental, sub-foundation, anti-radon membrane. End of experiment: - he still gets radon in his house.

During the search for a worthy candidate for this award, many health officers and environmental health specialists sent comments and voiced support for our honoree this morning. Whether he realizes it or not, he touched many lives, one of whom claims that in the Environmental Health and Law Course in 1973, our honoree's guidance and supervision set the stage for him and many others to advance to the position of health officer.

Whether he was working in a municipal health department in Essex County or at Rutgers University or at the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, our recipient was an innovator, a leader but mostly an instructor/teacher. I personally, worked with our honoree while trying to clean up a big mess at Chemical Control in the City of Elizabeth in the late 70s and early 80s. Then again, in creating the largest indoor mall in New Jersey at the Jersey Garden Mall on top of a former landfill in the City of Elizabeth in the late 90s. All the while I was maintaining liaison with him through the Clean Air Council.

While compiling these few facts about our recipient, I became frightened when one local health officer proclaimed him to be the "Father of Modern Public Health in New Jersey", and "Taught most of New Jersey's Public health leaders of today..." And we all thought we knew our fathers?

Our recipient is not a loner and is married to Mary for at least 20 years. He currently serves as Chairperson of a local board of health, and has served for more than 15 years on this same board. He currently serves as a principal consultant in a private engineering firm in Trenton — not far from the State house on West State Street.

As President of the NJHOA, it is with the greatest personal and professional honor that I present our Association's "**Frank J. Osborne Memorial Award**" to **Dr. Jorge Berkowitz**, of Langan Engineering of Trenton, New Jersey and residing in Delaware Township, NJ as the 45th recipient of this prestigious recognition award.

